Fire in Vigyan Bhawan

885. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question 33 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 2nd May, 1990 and state:

(a) whether the Delhi Fire Service had served a legal notice on the CPWD regarding lack of fire safety in Vigyan Bhawan;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken thereon;

(c) whether the whole construction will be pulled down for reconstruction; and

(d) the estimate of expenditure likely to be incurred on the reconstruction thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (d) CPWD authorities were asked to provide certain essential fire prevention and fire safety measures. The committee appointed by DG (Works), CPWD, is of the view that a substantial part of the existing structural system could be used by adopting suitable strengthening measures. It has tentatively estimated an amount of Rs. 753 lacs for the reconstruction of the Vigyan Bhawan.

Rehabilitation of Tamil refugees

886. SHRI BASUDEB MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Sri Lankan Premier Mr. D. B. Wijetunge during his recent visit to New Delhi in connection with ADP meeting agreed for early return of refugees in India from the North-Eastern province of Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, what is the total number of such refugees from Sri Lanka at present and what scheduled has been worked out for their return;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government of Tamil Nadu had refused to accommodate refugees in that State;

(d) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(e) whether Government have given any direction to the State Governments to settle these refugees in different parts of the country; and

(f) the total amount spent so far on the rehabilitation and other amenities provided to the Tamil refugees?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) This matter was taken up with the Sri Lankan Prime Minister during his visit to Delhi and Sri Lanka was requested to create the conditions which would enable the Sri Lankan refugees to return at the earliest. Sri Lankan Prime Minister expressed the hope that the refugees would be able to return soon.

(b) Total number of Sri Lankan refugees in India is approximately 93,000. No exact schedule for their return can be indicated as this would depend primarily on the return of normalcy in Sri Lanka and creation of conditions conducive to their return.

(c) and (d) The overwhelming majority of Sri Lankan refugees are in Tamil Nadu.

(e) No, Sir. Government expect these refugees to return to Sri Lanka.

(f) An expenditure of Rs. 15.38 crores has been incurred on refugees, who have sought Government's assistance and who have stayed in camps in India.